DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 286 614 PS 016 807

AUTHOR Holloway, Susan D.; And Others
TITLE Contrasting Childrearing Beliefs: Mothers and Preschool Teachers in Mexico.
PUB DATE Aug 86
NOTE 39p.; Portions of this paper were presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association (Washington, DC, August 22-26, 1986).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Standards; *Beliefs; *Child Rearing; Comparative Analysis; Family Characteristics; Foreign Countries; *Mothers; Parent Attitudes; Preschool Education; *Preschool Teachers; *Social Behavior; Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS Context Effect; *Mexico

ABSTRACT

The child rearing beliefs of 68 Mexican mothers and preschool teachers were compared. Also investigated were differences in beliefs of mothers in two types of families: the first characterized by interdependent social structures where the actors are closely linked by emotional ties, the second by individualistic social structures where social relations are more instrumental. Findings indicated that preschool teachers expected children to master basic developmental skills at an earlier age than did mothers. Teachers more strongly valued the development of independent and cooperative behavior, and placed less importance on obedience. Teachers also reported employing more flexible and nonauthoritarian discipline strategies than did mothers. The two types of caregivers did not differ on the extent to which they attributed the success of their discipline strategies to their own actions rather than to external factors. In contrast to mothers in independent families, mothers in interdependent families were more likely to believe in later mastery of basic developmental skills and to make external attributions. These findings suggest that Mexican children experience incongruous social norms as they move between home and school, and that these norms, at least within the home, are associated with the social structural features of the setting. (Author/RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED286614

Contrasting Childrearing Beliefs: Mothers and Preschool Teachers in Mexico

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Susan D. Holloway
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Susan D. Holloway
&
Kathleen Gorman

University of Maryland

Bruce Fuller

World Bank

PS 016807

Portions of this paper were presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D. C., August, 1986.

Child-Rearing Beliefs within Diverse Social Structures: Mothers and Preschool Teachers in Mexico

Abstract

The child-rearing beliefs of 68 Mexican mothers and preschool teachers were compared. Preschool teachers expected children to master basic developmental skills at an earlier age than did mothers. Teachers more strongly valued the development of independent and cooperative behavior, and placed less importance on obedience. Teachers also reported employing more flexible and nonauthoritarian discipline strategies than did mothers. The two types of caregivers did not differ on the extent to which they attributed the success of their discipline strategies to their own actions rather than to external factors. Also examined was how mothers' beliefs differed in families characterized by interdependent versus individualistic social structures. In interdependent families, mothers were more likely to believe in later mastery of basic developmental skills and to make external attributions (after the effects of social class are removed). These findings suggest that Mexican children experience incongruous social norms as they move between home and school, and that these norms, at least within the home, are associated with the social structural features of the setting.

Research on parents' and teachers' beliefs about child rearing is abundant (e.g., Sigel, 1985; Clarke & Peterson, 1986), yet little is known about the origins and determinants of caregiver beliefs. Only recently have researchers begun to focus on the effects of factors such as the social context (Holloway & Fuller, 1983) and information processing capabilities (Bacon & Ashmore, 1986) of the caregiver. In this study, we examine Mexican mothers' and teachers' beliefs about the importance of encouraging a child to act independently versus in a cooperative and obedient manner. In particular, we compare beliefs of individuals within interdependent social structures where the actors are closely linked by emotional ties with those of caregivers in individualistic structures, where social relations are more instrumental. We hypothesize that caregivers in interdependent social structures believe in the importance of socializing cooperation among peers and obedience to authority, whereas caregivers in individualistic settings promote independent behavior.

We test this hypothesis by first comparing the beliefs held by caregivers within two social structures, the home and the school. In comparing teachers with mothers, we classify the home and school settings as interdependent and individualistic, respectively, drawing upon the literature on family and school in the U.S. and Mexico. In this type of analysis, "ideal type" social structures are defined along general dimensions, with the

understanding that particular settings may deviate to varying degrees from the model (Weber, 1924). While the home and school contexts have been compared in several studies in the U.S. (Hess, Price, Dickson & Conroy, 1981; Rubenstein & Howes, 1979), little work has been done in developing countries such as Mexico where the differences may be even more sharply defined due to contrasts between traditional views and ideology borrowed from the U.S.

While comparisons across broad social categories such as mothers and teachers provide an initial perspective on the relationship of social context to beliefs, a more fine-tuned approach is to relate particular microstructural features of the setting to child-rearing beliefs. In the U.S., for example, Kohn and his colleagues have found that parents whose workplace requires conformity hold more authoritarian views about child rearing than those who are rewarded for initiative and independence on the job (Kohn, 1977; Miller, Schooler, Kohn, & Miller, 1979). Extending this type of analysis to the home and work settings of mothers, Holloway and Fuller (1983) found that women in settings with opportunities for independence and autonomy saw themselves as more salient and felt more in control of child-rearing situations than women from settings where possibilities for individual action were limited. We build on this analysis of the home setting, examining the relationship of mothers' child-rearing beliefs to indicators of interdependence

versus individualism within the Mexican family. Thus, we move beyond a simple characterization of beliefs within the home setting as discrepant or congruent with beliefs within the school, and toward an explanation of the specific social structural factors that may be associated with those beliefs.

Structural Characteristics of Preschools in Mexico

In developing nations such as Mexico, formal preschools are expanding rapidly (Secretaria de Educacion Publica, 1984). In some nations, indigenous socialization beliefs are strongly reflected in the curriculum and social structure of the school (Lewis, 1984; Wagner, 1983). However, in Mexico, the influence of Western educational programs appears to be quite salient due to the use of American textbooks in teacher training programs and the incorporation of American materials in the centrally-prescribed preschool curriculum. Social behavior that is likely to be encouraged in American educational programs includes developing independence from the family, verbalizing personal feelings and ideas, showing curiousity and exploratiVeness, and asserting one's rights when appropriate (Dreeben, 1968). It seems likely that Mexican children may also experience this set of norms and expectations to the extent that educational programs in that country are imported from the U.S.

Defining Interdependence in Mexican Families

In interdependent settings, maintenance of harmonious relations within the group is valued over individual achievement

(Rothschild-Whitt, 1979). Thus, the development of sensitivity to others and cooperative skills is more important than focusing on independence and assertiveness. In Mexico, the value placed on cooperation and friendship has frequently been demonstrated. In studies of cooperation and competition in game-playing situations, greater cooperation has been found among Mexican children than among Mexican-American and Anglo children (Kagan & Madsen, 1971; Knight, Kagan, & Buriel, 1981). The Mexican individual's sensitivity to others and desire for collective harmony is also reflected in the consistent empirical finding of higher levels of field dependence and lower levels of internal locus of control among Mexican adults compared to North Americans (Holtzman, Diaz-Guerrero, & Swartz, 1975; Ramirez & Castaneda, 1974; Tallman, Marotz-Baden, & Pindas, 1983). In addition, social interdependence can be inferred from an emphasis placed in Mexico on number, intensity, and affective level of personal relationships rather than on individual achievement (Bridges, 1980).

This apparent sensitivity to others and orientation toward cooperation rather than competition appears to be fostered within the family. In Mexico, where families are large and frequently include extended family members, the individual may be less salient than in smaller U.S. families. Family members in Mexico are expected to contribute to the welfare of the group; young

children often care for younger siblings or perform other tasks to contribute to the family's income or well-being (Bridges, 1980). Furthermore, parents in Mexico tend to nurture cooperative rather than competitive competencies (Bridges, 1980; Finley & Lane, 1971), considering the development of social concern and obedience more important than do U.S. mothers, and placing emphasis on fostering curiousity and independence (Holtzman, Diaz-Guerrero, & Swartz, 1975).

The Mexican family does not, at all times, focus on the collective's interests within a horizontal authority structure. Parents, especially fathers, at times are seen by children as harsh and distant disciplinarians who demand obedience and respect (Penalosa, 1968). In one comparison of Mexican and U.S. mothers, Mexicans were more likely to agree with statements expressing authoritarian orientation toward discipline (e.g., "Strict discipline develops a fine strong character") (Holtzman, Diaz-Guerrero, & Swartz, 1975). However, this hierarchical form of authority may be tempered by each individual's dependence on others within the collective unit. This dynamic has been noted in Japanese society, where each individual must fulfill his social role, including the authority figure (father, manager, or emperor), who is obligated to provide a place for each individual (Fuller, Holloway, Azuma, Hess & Kashiwagi, in press).

Child Rearing Beliefs: An Individualistic or Interdependent Emphasis?

While we used microstructural indicators to classify families as either individualistic or interdependent, the literature on the Mexican family suggests that in specifying child-rearing ideology, the category of interdependence subsumes at least two distinct notions, that of obedience and that of cooperation. For instance, when children are socialized to obey their parents without question, authority is arranged vertically. In contrast, the cooperative form of interdependence denotes a democratic or horizontal form of authority and a moral solidarity which blurs the boundaries of individual interests. Thus, where appropriate, we use this more differentiated view of interdependence in characterizing caregiver beliefs.

Caregivers' Beliefs regarding Independence, Cooperation, and Obedience

The two primary criteria for selecting the particular child rearing beliefs to assess were relevance to the dimensions of interest -- independence, cooperation and obedience -- and demonstrated relationship in the U.S. to the child's later social competence and school performance. Very little quantitative work has been done on the Mexican family; therefore, a wide variety of beliefs was sampled in order to obtain a comprehensive view of potentially important constructs. One area we assessed was the caregiver's expectations concerning the development of skills

related to independence, cooperation, and obedience. By asking caregivers the age at which they expected children to master these skills, we hoped to gain a better understanding of the types of behavior they would encourage. Previous research indicates that expectations may "set limits within which parents are likely to reinforce, restrict, or accept specific behaviors of the child. They may actively encourage a given skill. . . to bring the child up to the adult's internal norm" (Hess et al., 1980, p. 5). We hypothesized that mothers would expect earlier development of skills related to obedience and cooperation, while teachers would encourage independence. In the home setting, we also expected that the emphasis on early attainment of obedience and cooperation would prevail in more interdependent families. Second, we assessed the importance mothers placed on the development of various skills reflecting independence, cooperation, and obedience to authority. Compared to teachers, mothers were expected to place less importance on independence and more on obedience and cooperation, and a relationship was expected between these values and the microstructural indicators of interdependence within the home.

Third, causal explanations or attributions made by caregivers to explain their success in dealing with problem-solving situations were elicited. Attribution theory has been a rich framework for understanding the cognitive bases of

individual achievement motivation (for a review, see Weiner, 1980). Recently, mothers'and teachers' attributions regarding children's behavior have also been explored (e.g., Clarke & Peterson, 1986; Holloway, 1986). In the current study, our goal was to investigate the caregiver's locus of causality (internal versus external) in disciplining a child. In previous research, internal attributions have been associated with feelings of efficacy or competence. However, in these studies the social context is rarely considered. Elsewhere, we have proposed that attributions may covary with social structure (authors' citations). Individuals within interdependent settings may more frequently make external attributions because of the social network circumscribing individual actions. This important link between locus of causality and social structure is further explored in our study of Mexican caregivers. We expected that mothers would be more likely than teachers to give external attributions, reflecting their diminished salience in a relatively interdependent setting. Mothers within interdependent settings were expected to give more external attributions than mothers in individualistic families.

Fourth, we assessed the disciplinary strategies preschool teachers and mothers used in controlling their children. Our interest here was the extent to which the caregiver forced the child to fit within the caregiver's social framework. In disciplining children caregivers may set flexible conditions

which offer the child choices among ways to comply, or inflexible conditions requiring the child to respond immediately to adult demands (Conroy, Hess, Azuma, & Kashiwagi, 1980). It seems likely that in interdependent settings less flexibility or accommodation to the child is tolerated if the social harmony of the group takes precedence over the personal desires of a particular individual. Therefore, in the current study, it was expected that mothers would be less flexible in their demands than teachers, and that within the home setting, interdependence would be associated with less flexibility.

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of 36 mothers and 32 preschool teachers. The mothers all had at least one child between the ages of 33 and 70 months. The average age of the target child at the time of the maternal interview was 52.26 months (SD 8.71). Fourteen of the target children were girls and 22 were boys. Family size varied from 1 child to 12, with an average of 3.47 (SD 2.34). Mothers' education varied from 2 to 18 years, with a mean of 8.30 (SD 4.41). Fathers' education also varied from 2 to 18 years, with a mean of 9.59 (SD 4.68). Approximately one third of the mothers were employed outside the home, in occupations varying from domestic worker to professional. Fathers' occupations also varied from laborer to professional. The

families were from Morelia, a medium-sized, moderately prosperous city in the central highlands state of Michoacan.

The preschool teachers were from Morelia or Puebla, also a medium sized city, in the state of Puebla. The teachers were sampled independently of the mothers; thus, mothers and teachers were not interviewed about a common pool of children. Rather, mothers were interviewed about their own children, and teachers were interviewed about children in their classes. The average educational level of the teachers was 13.88 years, varying from 11 to 20 years (SD 2.24). The number of years they had been in their job category varied from 1 to 18 years, with a mean of 7.03 (SD 5.47). The schools varied from small private centers to large public preschools. The number of children within the school varied from 16 to 600, with a mean of 176.93 (SD 149.69).

Procedure

Participants were obtained by telephone listing, door to door solicitation, or personal referral. Interviews were conducted at the home or workplace by five trained interviewers, native to the city in which the interview took place. Each interview was audio recorded and later transcribed and coded in the U.S. by bilingual research assistants.

Instruments

Developmental Expectations Questionnaire. Seven items were adapted from the Developmental Expectations Questionnaire (Hess et al., 1980) to assess the age at which the caregiver expected a

child to acquire various skills. Three categories of items were used: those representing independence-related skills (asks for explanations and says what wants), cooperative behavior (resolve problems without fighting, understands feelings of others, uses polite greetings) and obedience to authority (come when called, doesn't do the prohibited). Respondents were asked to indicate the age at which they expect children in general to acquire that skill.

Values Questionnaire. This scale was developed to assess caregivers' views of the importance of encouraging behavior exemplifying obedience, independence, and cooperation. The respondent was shown six pairs of behaviors tapping the three domains of interest. Respondents were asked to indicate which of the two were more important when a child is growing up. The pairings are listed below, with an indication whether they represent the domain of obedience (O), independence (I) or cooperation (C):

A child should learn to

1. Obey parents (O) or be independent of them (I)
2. Resolve problems with the teacher by discussion (C) or follow the teacher's directions (O)
3. Obey the time schedule set by parents (O) or manage his/her time in the way that most suits himself/herself (I)
4. Behave well in the classroom (O) or give help to a friend (C)

5. Accommodate opinions and those of parents in a harmonious manner (C) or obey parents (O)
6. Study the topics that the teacher thinks are important (O) or become involved in topics of special personal interest (I)

Three composites created by summing the relevant items in each category had the following alpha values: .87 (independence), .92 (obedience), and .89 (cooperation).

Strategies and Attributions. Five hypothetical situations were presented to the respondents. Each situation was an instance of child misbehavior that seemed to require adult intervention. The respondents were first asked to indicate what they would do in that situation. Mothers were asked to respond in terms of their own preschool child, while teachers were requested to respond in terms of a child in their class. For three of the situations the caregiver was then asked for her attribution regarding success: "When that strategy gives you good results, why do you think it works?"

The following incidents were used:

1. In general, when a/your child behaves badly
2. When you fix a/your child something to eat and he/she says he/she doesn't want it (no attribution question asked)
3. When you want a/your child to sleep and he/she says he/she isn't tired (no attribution question asked)

4. When a/your child hits another child with a stick
5. When a/your child grabs something from another child

The first attribution given was coded as internal or external, with respect to the respondent. Internal attributions included references to the respondent's personal characteristics, such as firmness, patience and ability to communicate clearly, and their resources such as training or knowledge of children. External attributions included references to the child, such as being well-behaved or intelligent, or to other features of the social context, such as the father. One dichotomous attribution variable was created for each situation, with a value of 0 for an external attribution and 1 for an internal attribution. One composite variable was created by summing across the three situations for which attributions were elicited (numbers 1, 4, and 5 listed above). This composite had an alpha value of .66.

The strategies were coded along a five point scale representing the dimension of flexibility. This scale was anchored at one end by "use of physical force" (e.g., "I hit him"; "I took it away from him") and at the other end by "giving in to the demands of the child" (e.g., "I let him have it"; "I don't make him eat it"). There was not a sufficiently high degree of intercorrelation among the items in this scale to create a composite. Therefore, individual items were examined in the comparison of mothers'and teachers' beliefs, but no scale was

created for the analysis of the relationship of mothers' beliefs to the microstructural indicators of interdependence.

Microstructural Indicators of Interdependence

Three characteristics have been identified that typify social structures as interdependent or individualistic: physical distance, influence of self, and quality of interdependence (Holloway & Fuller, 1983; Rothschild-Whitt, 1979). In this study, within the home setting, operational measures were developed to assess the family's standing on each of these three components. Our goal was to select measures which could readily be classified in terms of the dimension of independence, which represented salient features of the home setting, and which had been associated with beliefs in previous research (authors' citations).

First, the physical distance between self and others was assumed to be less within interdependent settings because the need to consider the interests of others may depend upon the number and proximity of other actors. We used the number of children currently living in the household as one operational measure of physical distance. A second measure was the average of the number of years the mother and father had lived in Morelia.

Second, the influence of the self relative to other actors was assumed to be less in interdependent settings. In households where tasks are performed jointly with others, family members may feel more tied to the personal inclinations of others than when

tasks are performed individually. We tested this structural assumption by examining the organization of household tasks. A variable was created by subtracting the number of chores children were asked to perform independently from those chores that were completed with the assistance of another person.

Third, the quality of interdependence was assumed to discriminate interdependent and individualistic settings. Within the family, powerful affective benefits are mutually derived by mothers and children. We operationalized such factors by measuring the degree of reliance on kin relations in providing child care. A score of (0) represented care by the mother and father only; (1) represented care by a family member other than the parents; (2) represented care by a nonfamily member. We also examined one indicator of family members' tendency to seek each others' company rather than that of friends or work associates: the amount of time the family spends at home watching television.

In addition to these microstructural indicators of independence, years of schooling of mothers, fathers, and teachers were used in several analyses. A composite was created of mothers' and fathers' education; the correlation between these two items was .61 ($p < .001$). Fathers' occupation was quantified using the following seven point scale: (1) personal servant, (2) farm worker, (3) manual laborer, (4) self-employed store keeper, (5) low level white collar worker, (6) mid level white collar

worker, (7) professional.

Reliability

Inter-rater reliability was computed on those variables where judgment in coding was called for. Percent agreement was computed for 10 cases, 5 mothers and 5 teachers. Each maternal protocol contained four strategy questions and three attributions; each teacher protocol contained four strategy questions and three attributions. Mean percent agreement was 85% on the attribution variables and 92% on the strategies.

Analysis

The first set of analyses pertained to the comparison of mothers versus teachers. Four MANOVAs were conducted with group (mothers and teachers) as a single between subjects factor and the following 4 sets of outcomes: developmental expectations (7 items), values (3 composites), discipline strategies (4 items), and attributions (3 items). Bonferroni's *t* tests were used to determine the significance between the two groups. Then, Spearman rank order correlations were computed among the outcome measures. In order to examine the relative influence of educational factors in accounting for mother/teacher differences, regressions were conducted. The independent variables included number of years of schooling and a dummy variable representing group membership (teacher vs. mother). The outcome variables used were the expectation composite (sum of all expectation items), the three values composites, and the attribution

composite (sum of attributions for three situations).

The second set of analyses was conducted within the group of mothers in order to determine the relationship among the independent and dependent variables. Spearman rank order correlations were computed among the microstructural variables and demographic variables, and between the outcome composites and the microstructural variables and demographic variables. A set of regressions was then computed in which the two social class indicators (father's occupation and mother's plus father's schooling) were entered along with those microstructural indicators with the strongest correlations to the outcomes.

Results

Comparison of Mothers and Teachers

In Table 1, means and standard deviations are presented for mothers vs. teachers on the expectation items, the values composites, and the attribution and strategy variables. Significant differences were found for most of the variables. On the expectation items, teachers expected earlier development on every item; for four of the seven items, the difference was significant. Thus, teachers express early expectations in all domains, not just regarding individualistic behavior, as was hypothesized. Furthermore, examination of the order in which items were ranked reveals little difference between mothers and teachers. Three of the seven items were ranked identically by

the two groups, and the rankings of three items differed by only one (e.g., "uses polite greetings" was ranked second earliest by teachers and third by mothers). These findings suggest that mothers and teachers are equally knowledgeable about the sequence in which particular developmental competencies emerge, but that teachers may press for earlier mastery of these skills.

In selecting behaviors that they consider most important for a child to learn, teachers were more likely than mothers to choose behavior reflecting independence and less likely to focus on those reflecting obedience. Contrary to our hypothesis, teachers also placed greater importance than mothers on cooperation.

In three of four comparisons, teachers favored a flexible discipline strategy that accommodated the desires of the child. This is in accordance with our hypotheses. Only the situation regarding a child's refusal to go to bed did not yield significant differences. In the course of interviewing, it became evident that Mexican caregivers are not as preoccupied with getting children to sleep at a particular hour as are U.S. caregivers, hence it is not surprising that no differences emerged between mothers and teachers.

No differences were found between mothers and teachers regarding attributions for relative success in disciplining the child. This may be because the situations used to elicit attributions were drawn from a narrow domain, that of behavioral infractions. Differences between mothers and teachers may be

more likely to occur in other domains. In regard to the child's attainment of cognitive competencies, for example, teachers may feel more responsible for success than do mothers.

Insert Table 1 about here

Examination of the intercorrelation among the outcome composite measures revealed high correlations among the three values composites (cooperation with obedience: $r = -.90$, $p < .001$; independence with cooperation: $r = .65$, $p < .001$; independence with obedience: $r = -.88$, $p < .001$). The high correlation among the three composites suggests that they may constitute a single construct reflecting self-initiated versus other-directed behavior.

The regression analyses (Table 2) indicated that group membership bore a stronger relationship to the outcomes than educational level. Group membership was a significant predictor for the three values composites, while education was not a significant predictor of any outcome. Thus, the differences between mothers and teachers cannot be attributed simply to differing amounts of education. On-the-job training and structural features of the school and home settings may be more crucial factors in shaping ideology than is level of education.

Insert Table 2 about here

Family Structural Effects on Mothers' Beliefs

None of the microstructural indicators was correlated with the others. Examination of the intercorrelations among the demographic variables relating to the family (i.e., fathers' occupation, mothers' and fathers' education, mother working vs. not working, sex of child, and age of child) revealed significant associations between mothers' education and fathers' occupation ($r=.47$, $p < .01$) and mothers' education and fathers' education ($r=.61$, $p < .001$). Mothers who did not work outside the home were less educated than those who did ($r=.59$, $p < .01$), as were their husbands ($r=.44$, $p < .01$). When these home demographic variables were correlated with the outcome composites, only one correlation was found: the higher the father's education, the more likely the mother was to value independent behavior ($r=.34$, $p < .05$).

Of primary interest was the correlation between the microstructural variables and the belief composites for mothers. All significant correlations were in the hypothesized direction. Mothers who valued independence were less likely to rely on non-relatives to care for their children ($r=.42$, $p < .01$). Women with earlier expectations had fewer children ($r=.45$, $p < .01$) and were more often from households with greater numbers of individually-performed chores ($r=-.46$, $p < .01$). Additionally, women who made external attributions were less likely to spend

time watching television with the family ($r = -.43$, $p < .01$).

The regressions revealed that the findings regarding expectations and attributions held up even when parents' education and fathers' occupation were added as predictors. Mothers with a small number of children and those who assigned individual chores had early expectations (Table 3). Women who made external attributions spent more time with family members watching television. All of these relationships are in the predicted direction. The contribution of social class was not significant for any of the outcomes.

Insert Table 3 about here

Discussion

The differences in child-rearing beliefs held by preschool teachers versus mothers are quite vivid. Preschool teachers expected children to develop social and cognitive skills at a younger age than did mothers. Teachers more highly valued the development of individualistic skills and those pertaining to cooperation, and deemphasized the importance of obedience. They reported employing discipline strategies which accommodated the child's desires rather than exercising their own will. Finally, teachers did not more often attribute success of their strategy to their own actions rather than to external factors.

Thus, our data offer support for the notion that teachers within the individualistic school setting place importance on the

development of autonomy rather than obedience, and avoid heavy-handed disciplinary techniques that may impair the development of these desired characteristics. Their focus on autonomy does not imply a neglect of cooperative skills, however, as some analysts of education in Third World countries have feared (Hazen, 1978; Magendzo, 1984). In our sample, cooperation and independence were twin goals of teachers. Within the family, obedience was of paramount importance, and discipline strategies were reported that ensured compliance rather than fostering personal efficacy. Our findings thus echo those of others, revealing a strong authoritarian orientation in Mexican parents (e.g., Holtzman, Diaz-Guerrero, and Swartz, 1975). In addition, our findings distinguish between an allegiance to the group within a hierarchical social structure and contribution to group harmony through lateral interaction in a horizontal framework.

The effects on children of the conflict between mothers' and teachers' beliefs is not known. Some have argued that individual characteristics do not themselves predict adjustment as well as the "goodness of fit" between these characteristics and the child's social context (Lerner, 1984). There may be a limit, as yet unspecified, to children's ability to negotiate extremely different types of settings. For example, abundant research in the U.S. has demonstrated the difficulty children from minority subcultures may have in adapting to the authority patterns and

discourse conventions of the mainstream classroom (e.g., Hall & Guthrie, 1981; Heath, 1983; Philips, 1972). Our data indicate a conflict between teachers and mothers in the extent to which they focus on the importance of obeying authority. By encouraging children to focus on their own goals rather than those of authority figures, teachers may be altering a social pattern characterized by a willingness to sacrifice one's own needs to those of the family unit. Increased parent child conflict is one possible outcome of such an alteration.

Yet, it cannot be assumed that incongruent contexts are necessarily harmful to the child. Many children learn to move between settings, adapting flexibly to the expectations and demands of a variety of caregivers. Also, U. S. researchers have found that opportunities present in one context, such as the school, can address deficiencies in another such as the home (Epstein, 1985). Taking this notion a step farther, commentators on industrialization in Third World countries have argued that adoption of Western forms of socialization is necessary to foster the openness to new ideas and the personal initiative underlying modernization (Inkeles, 1983). Indeed, findings from studies in the U.S. indicate that authoritarian child-rearing practices similar to those endorsed by Mexican mothers do not facilitate school achievement in American children (Hess & McDevitt, 1985). Perhaps by placing a priority on personal expression and creative exploration, teachers in Mexico offset this potentially negative

parental practice.

Looking just among the Mexican mothers, we found considerable variation in the emphasis placed on individualistic versus interdependent values. This variation should not go unnoticed. Images of both family structure and child rearing in developing countries are often dominated by a simple dichotomy between modern versus traditional settings. Our study demonstrates that greater variation exists than is implied by this oversimplification.

Furthermore, this variation in child-rearing beliefs corresponded to certain indicators of the family's level of interdependence. For instance, we found that mothers who cared for more children and who organized housework around cooperatively performed tasks believed that children develop several basic skills at an older age. This suggests that mothers who are embedded in more interdependent family structures tend to deemphasize the capacities of the individual child. We also found that mothers who spent more time within the home watching television tended not to attribute success of their (more authoritarian) discipline strategies to their own actions. Instead, they explained their success in terms of the external factors. Here again, we find that the salience of the individual (in this case, oneself) is less among mothers located within more interdependent family structures.

Specification of microstructural features of the context promises to be a fruitful avenue for moving beyond global notions such as social class in understanding how socialization practices evolve. However, many questions remain concerning the methodology for capturing most effectively variations in social structure. Yet to be determined is the most appropriate level of generality for defining social contexts; possible levels range from analysis of micro-situations such as meal time at home, to broader contexts such as the home in its entirety (Magnusson & Allen, 1985). The indicators of interdependence used in this study were not intercorrelated, suggesting that the notion of interdependence may be a multidimensional rather than unitary construct. Further work is clearly needed to clarify the theoretical underpinnings of this concept, and to develop more definitely appropriate indicators.

Instrumentation issues were also evident in the assessment of caregiver beliefs. We have noted that the individual attribution items and the values items could be grouped into composites, whereas the items tapping caregivers' strategies for dealing with misbehavior were not highly intercorrelated. This lack of internal consistency may be attributable to error stemming from the fact that caregivers are reporting on behavior rather than beliefs. Thus, while strong theoretical reasons exist to explore caregiver practices, methodological refinement is needed before definitive conclusions can be drawn.

Finally, it is important to note that causal patterns cannot be determined from the correlational data presented here. We offer a model in which the context is seen as influencing beliefs. However, beliefs are also a potential source of change to the context. For example, a mother who believes that nurturing a child's talents will maximize his or her personal satisfaction may choose to limit the number of children in the family in order to give each one more intensive attention. Longitudinal studies would be of great benefit in disentangling this complex interplay between social structure and beliefs.

References

Bacon, M. K., & Ashmore, R. D. (1986). A consideration of the cognitive activities of parents and their role in the socialization process. In R. D. Ashmore & D. M. Brodzinsky (Eds.), Thinking about the family: Views of parents and children (pp. 3-33). Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bridges, J. C. (1980). The Mexican family. In M. S. Das & C. Jesser (Eds.), The family in Latin America (pp. 295-334). New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

Clarke, C. M., & Peterson, P. L. (1986). Teachers' thought processes. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of Research on Teaching (3rd ed) (pp. 255-296). New York: Macmillan.

Conroy, M., Hess, R.D., Azuma, H., & Kashiwagi, K. (1980). Maternal strategies for regulating children's behavior. Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology, 11, 153-572.

Dreeben, R. (1968). On what is learned in school. Reading MA: Addison Wesley.

Epstein, J. L. (1985). A longitudinal study of school and family effects on student development. In S. Mednick & M. Harway (Eds.), Handbook of longitudinal research in the United States. New York: Praeger.

Finley, G., & Lane, O. (1971). Play behavior in young children: A cross-cultural study. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 119, 203-210.

Fuller, B., Holloway, S., Azuma, H., Hess, R.D. & Kashiwagi, K. (in

press). Contrasting achievement rules: Socialization of Japanese at home and in school. In A. Kerckhoff (Ed.), Research in Sociology of Education and Socialization. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Hall, W. S., & Guthrie, L. F. (1981). Cultural and situational variation in language function and use -- Methods and procedures for research. In J. L. Green & C. Wallat (Eds.), Ethnography and languge for educational settings (pp. 209-228). Norwood NJ: Ablex

Hazen, D. (1978). The politics of schooling in nonliterate Third World: The case of highland Peru. History of Education Quarterly, 18, 419-443.

Heath, S. B. (1983). Ways with words. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hess, R.D., Kashiwagi, K., Azuma, H., Price, G.G., & Dickson, W.P. (1980). Maternal expectations for mastery of developmental tasks in Japan and the United States. International Journal of Psychology, 15, 259-271.

Hess, R. D., & McDevitt, T. M. (1985). Some cognitive consequences of maternal intervention techniques. Child Development, 55, 2017-2030.

Hess, R.D., Price, G.G., Dickson, W.P., & Conroy, M. (1981). Different roles for mothers and teachers: Contrasting styles of day care. Advances in early education and day care. Vol. 2. (pp. 1-28). Greenwich, Conn.: JAI press.

Holloway, S.D. (1986). The relationship of maternal beliefs to

children's achievement in mathematics: Some effects of sex difference. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 32, 231-250.

Holloway, S. & Fuller, B. (1983) Situational determinants of causal attributions: The case of working women. Social Psychology Quarterly, 46, 131-140.

Holtzman, W., Diaz-Guerrero, R., & Swartz, J. (1975). Personality development in two cultures. Austin TX: University of Texas Press.

Inkeles, A. (1983). Exploring individual modernity. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kagan, G.P. & Madsen, M.C. (1971) Cooperation and competition in Mexican, Mexican-American, and American children of two ages under four instructional sets. Developmental Psychology, 5, 32-39.

Knight, G.P., Kagan, S., & Buriel, R. (1981). Confounding effects of individualism in children's cooperation-competition social motive measures. Motivation and Emotion, 5, 167-178.

Kohn, M. L. (1977). Class and conformity: A study in values. (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lerner, J. V. (1984). The import of temperament for psychosocial functioning: Test of a goodness of fit model. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 30(2), 177-188.

Lewis, C. (1984). Cooperation and control in Japanese nursery schools. Comparative Education Review, 28. 69-84.

Magendzo, A. (1984). Calidad de la educacion y su relacion con la cultura: Sintesis de una investigacion en un area indigena de Guatemala. La educacion: Revista interamericana de desarrollo

educativo, 96, 32-48.

Magnusson, D. & Allen, V. L. (1985). An interactional perspective for human development. In Magnusson, D., & Allen, V. L. (Eds.), Human development: An interactional perspective. (pp. 3-31). New York: Academic Press.

Miller, J., Schooler, C., Kohn, M., & Miller, K. (1979). Women and work: The psychological effects of occupational conditions. American Journal of Sociology, 85, 66-95.

Penalosa, F. (1968). Mexican family roles. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 30, 680-689.

Philips, S. U. (1972). Participant structures and communicative competence: Warm Springs children in community and classroom. In C. B. Cazden, V. P. John, & D. Hymes (Eds.). Functions of language in the classroom. (pp. 370-394). New York: Teachers College Press.

Ramirez, M., III, & Castaneda. A. (1974). Cultural democracy, bicognitive development, and education. New York: Academic Press.

Rothschild-Whitt, J. (1979). The collectivist organization: An alternative to rational-bureaucratic models. American Sociological Review, 44, 509-527.

Rubenstein, J.L., & Howes, C. (1979). Caregiving and infant behavior in day care and in homes. Developmental Psychology, 15, 1-24.

Sigel, I. E. (1985). A conceptual analysis of beliefs. In I. E. Sigel (Ed.), Parental belief systems: The psychological consequences for children. (pp. 347-371). Hillsdale NJ:

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Tallman, I., Marotz-Baden, R., & Pindas, P. (1983). Adolescent socialization in cross-cultural perspective: Planning for social change. New York: Academic press.

Wagner, D. A. (1983). Indigenous education and literacy in the Third World. In D. A. Wagner (Ed.), Child development and international development: Research-policy interfaces. (pp. 77-85). New Directions for Child Development. No. 20. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Weber, M. (1924). Bureaucracy. In H. H. Gerth & C. W. Mills (Eds.), From Max Weber: Essays in sociology. (pp. 196-224). New York: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1904).

Weiner, B. (1980). Human motivation. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Table 1. Beliefs of mothers and teachers (means, n=68).

Beliefs	Teachers	Mothers	Significant difference
Developmental expectations			
Resolves problems	6.21 (2.77)	7.58 (3.42)	ns
Comes when called	3.42 (1.68)	4.13 (2.21)	ns
Asks for explanations	3.93 (1.34)	5.57 (2.40)	*
Uses polite greetings	3.55 (1.20)	4.88 (2.57)	*
Obeys adults	4.28 (1.68)	6.02 (2.44)	*
Understands feelings	4.03 (1.79)	5.77 (2.49)	*
Expresses preferences	4.12 (1.84)	4.73 (2.52)	ns
Values			
Independence	.65 (.39)	.25 (.33)	*
Obedience	.24 (.22)	.59 (.27)	*
Cooperation	.87 (.19)	.58 (.29)	*
Strategies			
Behaves badly	2.74 (.56)	1.87 (.60)	*
Refuses to eat	4.04 (1.02)	3.24 (1.27)	*
Refuses to go to bed	4.12 (.83)	3.66 (1.17)	ns
Hits another child	2.47 (.55)	2.06 (.61)	*
Grabs from other child	2.54 (.56)	2.15 (.54)	*
Causal attributions			
Behaves badly	.41 (.48)	.42 (.48)	ns
Hits another child	.41 (.46)	.49 (.45)	ns
Grabs from other child	.21 (.39)	.25 (.41)	ns

(Table 1 -- ctd.)

Note. Means for developmental expectations are in years. For values, higher mean indicates higher value. For strategies, higher mean indicates more accommodating strategy. For attributions, higher mean indicates more internal.

1. Bonferroni's t-test; * = significant at $p<.05$ or stronger

Table 2. Influence of group membership (mother vs. teacher) on child rearing beliefs, controlling on effects of caregiver's years of schooling (unstandardized betas & standard errors reported, n=68)

Child rearing beliefs	Years of schooling	Group membership	Adjusted R-square (F value)
Expectations composite	-.22	.24	15%
	(.06)	(.51)	(6.71**)
Values			
Independence	.20	-.36**	24%
	(.01)	(.11)	(11.52***)
Obedience	-.18	.46***	33%
	(.01)	(.08)	(17.49***)
Cooperation	.08	-.46**	24%
	(.01)	(.08)	(11.77***)
Attribution composite	.04	.08	0%
	(.01)	(.11)	(.14)

Note. Expectation composite score is in years. For values, a higher score indicates higher value. For attribution composite, a higher score indicates more internal.

** p<.01 *** p<.001

Table 3. Influence of micro-structural factors on mothers' child rearing beliefs, controlling on effects of social class (standardized betas and standard errors reported, n=36)

	Social class		Micro-structural factors			Adjusted R-square & F value	
Child rearing beliefs	Father's occupation	Parents' schooling	Number of children	Amount of television	Individual vs group chores	Model 1	Model 2
Expectations composite	.10	-.10	.58***	.10	-.41**	48%	23%
	(.19)	(.09)	(.13)	(.15)	(.26)	(6.35***)	(7.72***)
Values							
Independence	-.01	.36	-.08	-.18	-.15	14%	11%
	(.04)	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)	(.06)	(1.92)	(2.14)
Obedience	-.01	-.23	.13	.21	.04	2%	5%
	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)	(.05)	(1.09)	(1.50)
Cooperation	.04	.01	-.18	-.20	.11	0%	0%
	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)	(.05)	(0.57)	(1.01)
Attribution composite	-.26	-.06	-.24	-.46*	.12	15%	8%
	(.04)	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)	(.05)	(2.03)	(3.01*)

Note. Betas and standard errors are for full regression (Model 1). Expectation composite score is in years. For values, a higher score indicates higher value. For attribution composite, a higher score indicates more internal.

(1) Model 1 includes three microstructural variables, fathers' occupation, and mothers' plus fathers' years of schooling. Model 2 includes three microstructural variables only.

* p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.001